



SEPT
NO. 21

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CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

**"The CHALLENGERS'
SPACE-PET ALLY!"**

COSMO IS TRYING TO SAVE
THE CHALLENGERS— BUT
CAN EVEN HIS AMAZING SPACE
POWERS OVERCOME THAT
FANTASTIC CREATURE?



CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

IN THEIR ENDLESS CHALLENGE OF THE UNKNOWN, ACE, PROF, ROCKY AND RED HAVE BEEN WHISKED INTO OTHER DIMENSIONS, TO DISTANT WORLDS AND THROUGH VORTEXES OF TIME TO BATTLE AWESOME CREATURES AGAINST PUNISHING ODDS! BUT NOW THEY ARE IN FOR A SHATTERING SURPRISE WHEN THEY SUDDENLY FIND THEMSELVES ON...

*the WEIRD WORLD
that DIDN'T EXIST*

RED! I DON'T
KNOW WHERE ACE
AND PROF ARE--
BUT THEY CAN'T
BE IN A WORSE
SPOT THAN THE
ONE WE'RE IN!

RIGHT, PAL--WE'RE CAUGHT
BETWEEN THE GIANT ROBOT
AND THE METALLIC
BIRDS!

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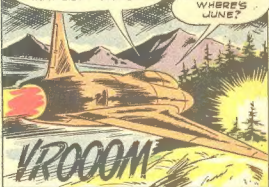
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ROARING THROUGH THE SKIES, THE CHALLENGERS' JET TRACKS A MYSTERIOUS RADIO SIGNAL-- THEN...

THAT'S WHERE THE CODED MESSAGE JUNE SENT IS COMING FROM-- THAT LIGHT YONDER!

CHECK, ACE-- BUT WHAT IN BLAZES CAN IT BE? AND WHERE'S JUNE?



THAT'S WHAT WE AIM TO FIND OUT-- RIGHT NOW!



BUT AS THEY RACE FORWARD, THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN ARE CAUGHT IN A CRISSCROSS OF STABBING, VARI-COLORED LIGHTS OF BLINDING BRILLIANCE...

BLAST IT! WHAT HAPPENED? I CAN'T SEE!

NEITHER CAN I!



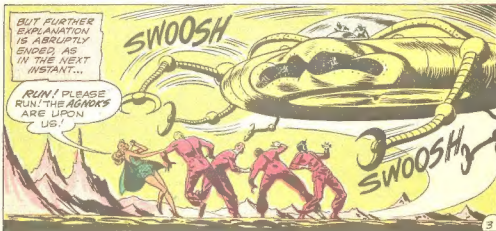
SOME SORT OF CHEMICAL IS BEING RELEASED! I--I FEEL DIZZY...

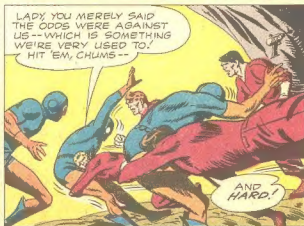
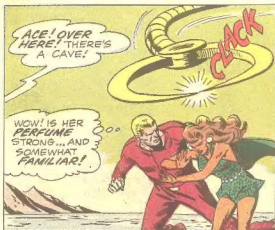
S-SO DO I...



SUDDENLY, UTTER DARKNESS INVADERS THEIR MINDS AS THE FAMED FOURSOME BLACKS OUT! THEN, TINY, DANCING SPECKS, LIKE DISTANT STARS, APPEAR TO TWINKLE...









CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



IN THE BRIEF INSTANT THAT THE RAY-GUN HAND RELAXES, ACE SPRINGS...

JUST AS I THOUGHT-- WE'VE BEEN HOODWINKED, BUT GOOD! THESE GUYS ARE FROM **EARTH**-- THEY'RE NOT ALIENS!

BLAST IT--YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO FIND OUT! WE'RE STUNT-MEN... **ACTORS!**



I WAS **WONDERING** WHY YOU SUGGESTED WE SURRENDER! WE WERE JUST GETTING **WARMED UP!**

I FIGURED THEY UNDERSTOOD US--AND THEY'D RELAX IF I SAID THAT!



BUT HOW DID YOU TUMBLE TO IT, ACE?

I SAW A **LUMP** UNDER THIS ONE'S "SKIN"--THAT EMITTED THE SOUND OF A **WRIST WATCH**. NOT ONLY THAT...



...THE GIRL'S **PERFUME** WAS A GIVE-AWAY, TOO! IT'S THE SAME KIND WE BOUGHT JUNE FOR HER BIRTHDAY!

WHY--IT'S **JUNE**--IN MAKE-UP! WHAT PLAYS HERE?



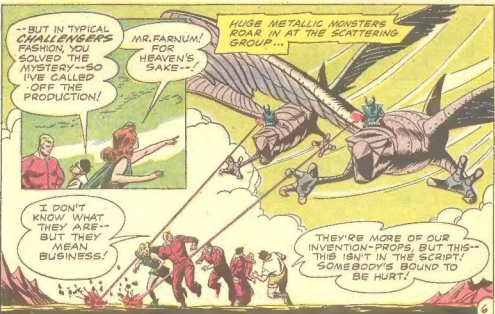
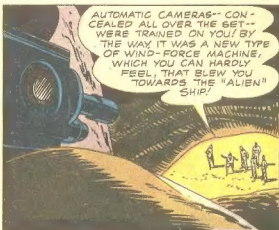
THEY'RE MAKING A SEMI-DOCUMENTARY MOVIE ON **THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN**. SINCE YOU'RE NOT **ACTORS**, I WAS ASKED TO HELP GET YOU HERE UNDER WHAT YOU'D THINK WERE GENUINE CIRCUMSTANCES!



OUR PRODUCTION IS **RUINED** NOW!

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF! I'M ALBERT D. FARNUM! THIS WAS ALL MY IDEA--AND I STAND RESPONSIBLE! YES, I HAD MISS ROBBINS CONTACT YOU! I WANTED A **NATURAL** MOVIE--WITHOUT ACTING PROBLEMS!





TERRIBLE IRON TALONS RAKE THE AIR,
SEIZING ROCKY AND RED...



PROF!
COME ON!
MAYBE WE
CAN STILL
GRAB 'EM!

BUT...

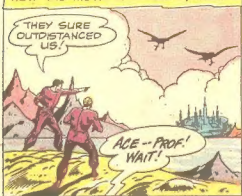


THIS WHISTLE
IS SUPPOSED
TO BRING
ALL ACTION
TO A HALT!

BUT IT DIDN'T!
SOMETHING'S
GONE WRONG--
AND PROF AND I
ARE GOING TO
FIND OUT WHAT
IT IS! JUNE--
WAIT HERE!



MAKING THEIR WAY OVER THE WEIRD,
ARTIFICIAL LANDSCAPE, ACE AND PROF
VIEW THE MOCK CITY AHEAD, THEN...

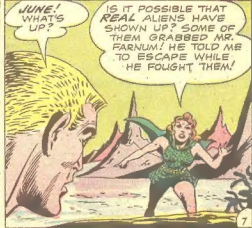


THEY SURE
OUTDISTANCED
US!

ACE--PROF!
WAIT!

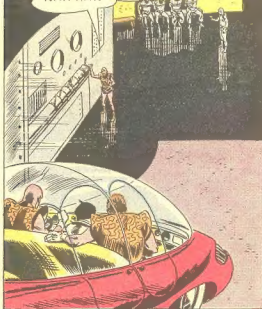
JUNE!
WHAT'S
UP?

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT
REAL ALIENS HAVE
SHOWN UP? SOME OF
THEM GRABBED MR.
FARNUM! HE TOLD ME
TO ESCAPE WHILE
HE FOUGHT THEM!





I PUSH THE SWITCH--THE BIG DOOR SLIDES BACK--AND HERE COMES THE BOSS. HEY! HE'S GOT OLD MONEY--BAGS FARNUM WITH HIM!



WE'VE GOT FARNUM AND TWO OF THE CHALLENGERS! THE OTHER ACTORS AND SOME OF THE CREW HAVE BEEN CAUGHT AND TIED UP TOO! SOON AS WE'VE GOT EVERYBODY, WE'LL MOVE OUT WITH THESE INVENTIONS!



PSST! I WAS AN ESCAPE ARTIST ON TV! I'VE GOT MY HANDS FREE! NOW WHAT?

UNTIE ME--AND I'LL FREE MY PAL! THEN WE'LL TAKE OVER! BUT HURRY!



MOMENTS LATER...

THAT'S IT--HIT 'EM AND HIT 'EM HARD-- THEN FREE THE OTHERS AND MAKE FOR THAT CAR!



BEFORE THE SURPRISED CROOKS CAN RECOVER...

TOO LATE! BUT THE OTHER BOYS WILL NAIL 'EM! SOUND THE ALARM!

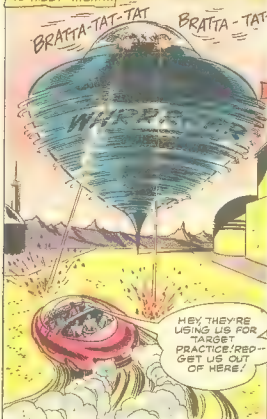




CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



NO SOONER DOES THE VEHICLE EMERGE THAN A NEW MENACE WHIRLS FORWARD TO MEET THEM...



BRATTA-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT

LISTEN, WHEN I PULL UP TO ONE OF THESE BUILDINGS, YOU FELLERS GET OUT--AND STAY PUT TILL WE PICK YOU UP AGAIN! ROCKY AND I'LL HANDLE THIS ALONE!



SECONDS LATER...

WHRRRRRRRR

HURRY- GET OUT! AND STAY INSIDE!

WHATEVER YOUR PLAN IS, RED, YOU'D BETTER GET STARTED! THAT WHIRLING DERVISH IS ALMOST ON OUR NECKS!



WHAT IS YOUR PLAN, BY THE WAY?

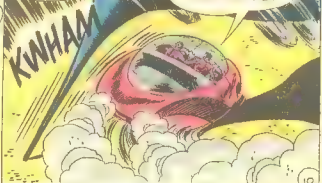
OH, IT'S VERY SIMPLE! WE'RE GOING TO UPSET THAT SPINNING FORTRESS-- LIKE THIS.

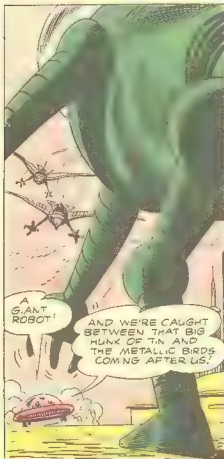
BRATTA-TAT-TAT

...SEE? WE SLAM INTO THE P.I.N--

KWHAM

YEAH! THEN TRY TO GET OUT OF THE WAY BEFORE IT LANDS ON US!





ONE OF THE METALLIC BIRDS IS SEIZED BY A GIANT FIST...



...WHILE THE OTHER ELUDES A MAMMOTH FLAILING ARM...



WHEN ROCKY AND RED QUICKLY ASCEND TO THE CONTROL ROOM...

ACE! YOU WERE ON THAT BRD. BUT WHERE'S PROF?

HE'LL SHOW UP SOON! WE CAUGHT THE REAL RIDERS OFF-GUARD, AND TOOK THEIR PLACES! AND IT LOOKS LIKE WE GOT HERE JUST IN TIME!



THEN, SHORTLY AFTER

IT TOOK ME A LITTLE WHILE TO DESCEND FROM THAT BIG HAND TO JOIN YOU

THE POLICE ARRIVED, AND TOOK THE CROOKS IN TOW. BUT THE BIG NEWS IS THAT THE CAMERAS WERE GOING ALL THE TIME. WE'VE GOT OUR MOVIE! AND IT'S AS NATURAL AS ANYBODY COULD ASK FOR



ADVERTISEMENT

Tootsie Roll makes HISTORY!

History says the ride of Paul Revere was to warn the folks the British were near, But between you and me the real cause for this feat was to wake everyone for a

Tootsie Roll TREAT!

AMERICA'S FAVORITE CANDY!





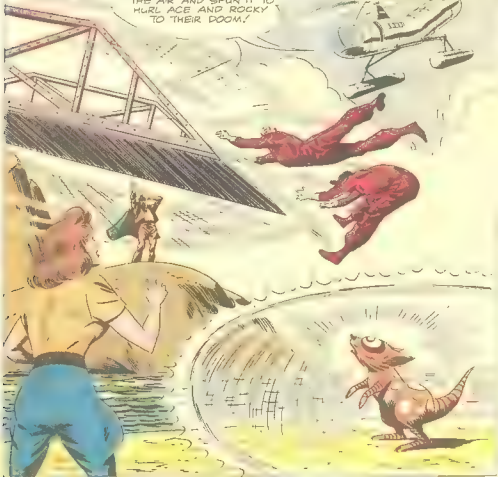
BRIDGE SOARED IN THE AIR. CREATURES APPEARED FROM NOWHERE! THESE WERE BUT A FEW OF THE ADVENTURES THAT LAUNCHED THE CHALLENGERS INTO ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS CASES OF THE UNKNOWN! BUT NEITHER THEY NOR THE FANTASTIC... THEY FACED WERE AWARE OF THE AMAZING ABILITIES OF COSMO...

THE CHALLENGERS' SPACE-PET ALLY

THAT MADMAN MYSTIC HAS WILLED THE BRIDGE INTO THE AIR AND SPUN IT TO HURL ACE AND ROCKY TO THEIR DOOM!

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

LOOK, PROF! COSMO HAS CREATED SOME KIND OF A FORCE FIELD BELOW THEM -- HE'S TRYING TO SAVE THEM WITH ONE OF HIS SPACE POWERS.



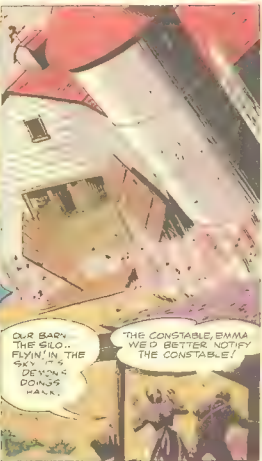
...A REAL COMMUNITY ANOTHER
...A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER...

RRRIIP! CRUNCH!

LIKE A TWISTER!
DON'T HEAR THE WIND A-WHISTLIN'!
HAVE A LOOK-SEE,
I SAY.



GREAT DAY IN THE MORN!
OUR LAND'S HEXED, EMMA!
COME SEE!



OUR BARN
FLYIN' IN THE
SKY! IT'S
DEVILS
DOINGS
HARK.

THE CONSTABLE, EMMA
WE'D BETTER NOTIFY
THE CONSTABLE!



THE SOUTH,
A SERIES OF

BY THE FAMED
CHALLENGERS
OF THE
UNKNOWN AND
THEIR HONORARY
GIRL MEMBER.

OSVO 4 TRAINING WE...
JUST LOOK AT HIM...
ONE OF HIS FANTASY...
POWERS TO ANGLE...
PSTOLS FROM THE...
OF WOULD-BE CRIMINALS!

...AE
...E...
...E...
...E...



CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



WE CERTAINLY WERE FORTUNATE IN SIGHTING THAT CAPSULE CONTAINING COSMO WHEN IT ENTERED EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE FROM OUTER SPACE!

I'LL SAY, JUNE! WONDER WHERE THE LITTLE FELLER CAME FROM AND... HEY! WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT!

WHAT'S THAT GLOWING RING COSMO HAS JUST CREATED, PROF?

UNDOUBTEDLY ANOTHER ONE OF HIS AMAZING SPACE POWERS, ROCKY! LET'S TRY TO IDENTIFY IT...



BUT THEN A RADIO BULLETIN INTERRUPTS THE CHALLENGERS...

WOODLAND COUNTY AGAIN REPORTS ANOTHER FANTASTIC PHENOMENON! FARMER HENRY PERKINS INSISTED TODAY THAT BOTH HIS BARN AND SILO FLOATED INTO THE AIR.

HOW ABOUT THAT? JUST YESTERDAY THE TRAIN TRACKS IN THAT AREA WERE MYSTERIOUSLY UPROOTED

YES, RED--AND IT WAS ATTRIBUTED TO A FREAK TWISTER! BUT THIS LAST REPORT CANCELS OUT THAT POSSIBILITY!

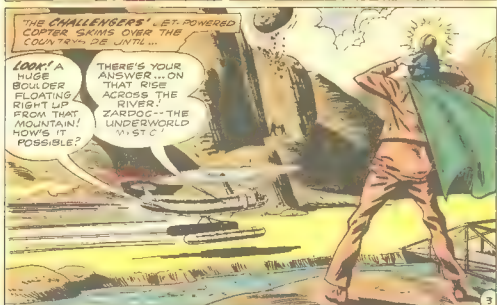
LET'S REV UP THE COPTER AND INVESTIGATE! JUNE--YOU WRAP THINGS UP HERE WITH COSMO AND JOIN US WITH THE DEED

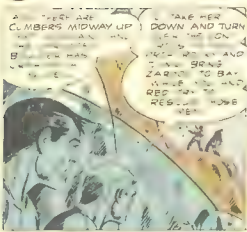


THE CHALLENGERS' LET-POWERED COPTER SKIMS OVER THE COUNTRY UNTIL...

LOOK! A HUGE BOULDER FLOATING RIGHT UP FROM THAT MOUNTAIN! HOW'S IT POSSIBLE?

THERE'S YOUR ANSWER...ON THAT RISE ACROSS THE RIVER! ZARDOG--THE UNDERWORLD MISTIC!





...THERE ARE
CLIMBERS MIDWAY UP
...AN
...CH HAS
...E

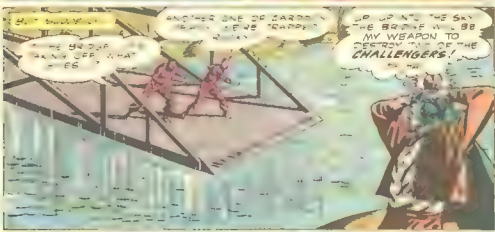
TAKE HER
DOWN AND TURN
...ON
...AND
...GRAB
ZARD TO BAY
...AND
RED TO
RESOLVE HOW
...E



SECONDS LATER

WE'VE BEEN GIVEN AN
EXPLANATION OF ALL
THE CHALLENGERS
...
...
DOING IT... AND
WHY?

YOU CAN ASK
HIM THAT IN
ABOUT SIXTY
SECONDS
...E



...E

ANOTHER ONE OF ZARD
...E

THE GROUP
WANT OFF WHAT
...E

UP UP INTO THE SKY
THE BRIDGE WILL BE
MY WEAPON TO
DESTROY THE
CHALLENGERS!



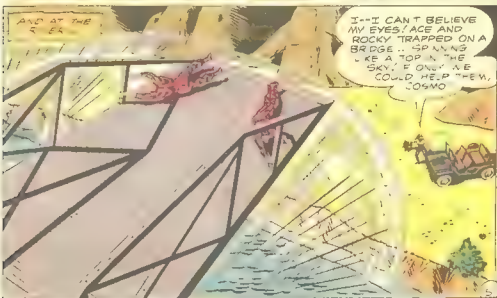
AND AT THAT
VERY MOMENT
THE OTHER
CHALLENGER
GROUP

ALL
CONFRONTING
DANGER

WE'VE BEEN TOLD
NEVER THAT MOUNTAIN
OF ROCK WILL BE
ON TOP OF US ALL
IN SECONDS!



CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



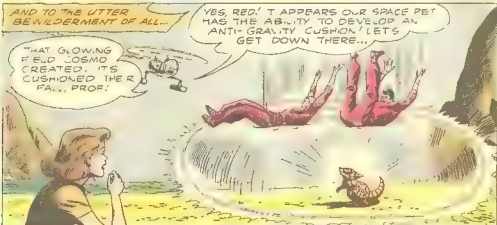
THEN, AS THE TWO DESPERATE CHALLENGERS LOSE THEIR BATTLE AGAINST CENTRIFUGAL FORCE...



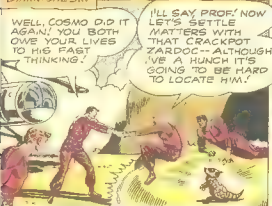
ABRUPTLY, THE SPACE PET GOES INTO ACTION...



AND TO THE UTTER BENLIEDERMENT OF ALL...



MINUTES LATER, AS THE GLOWING FIELD DIMINISHES...



LOOK! COSMO SEEMS TO HAVE PICKED UP HIS SCENT. WE'LL LET HIM LEAD THE WAY AND FOLLOW BY COPTER!





CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



MEANWHILE, IN A GREAT CAVERN NOT FAR AWAY...

I DON'T GET IT, ZARDOC! THAT PIECE OF STRANGE METEOR ROCK YOU FOUND AND WEAR ON YOUR HELMET HAS GIVEN YOU SUPER-POWERS--AND YOU STILL COULDN'T FINISH OFF THE CHALLENGERS!

I HAD SEALED THEIR DOOM WHEN A STRANGE ANIMAL PET OF THEIRS INTERVENED AND SAVED THEM!

THE CHALLENGERS WERE HELPLESS...IF ONLY I COULD THINK OF A CREATURE TO COPE WITH THAT PET!



SUDDENLY...

ZARDOC! A FIRE-BREATHING DRAGON'S ATTACKING US! DO SOMETHING!

EH? WHY...IT'S THE VERY BEAST MY THOUGHTS WERE CONCEIVING! COULD MY SUSPICIONS BE CORRECT..?



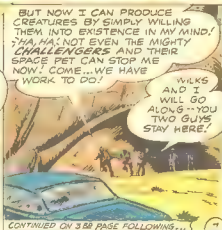
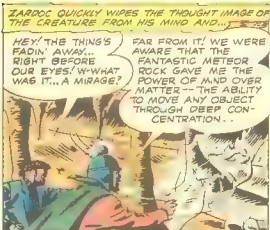
ZARDOC QUICKLY WIPES THE THOUGHT IMAGE OF THE CREATURE FROM HIS MIND AND...

HEY! THE THING'S FADIN' AWAY... RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES! W-WHAT WAS IT...A MIRAGE?

FAR FROM IT! WE WERE AWARE THAT THE FANTASTIC METEOR ROCK GAVE ME THE POWER OF MIND OVER MATTER--THE ABILITY TO MOVE ANY OBJECT THROUGH DEEP CONCENTRATION..

BUT NOW I CAN PRODUCE CREATURES BY SIMPLY WILLING THEM INTO EXISTENCE IN MY MIND! HA, HA! NOT EVEN THE MIGHTY CHALLENGERS AND THEIR SPACE PET CAN STOP ME NOW! COME...WE HAVE WORK TO DO!

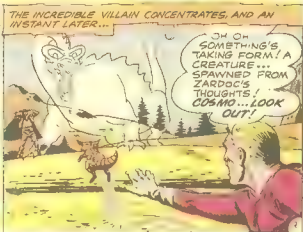
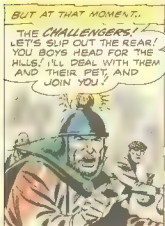
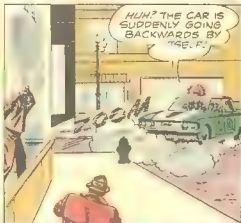
WILKS AND I WILL GO ALONG--YOU TWO GUYS STAY HERE!

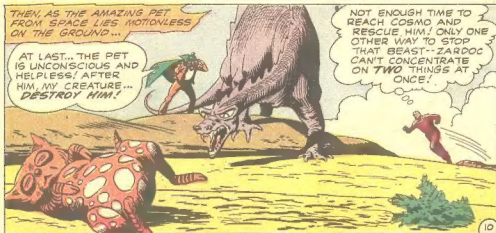
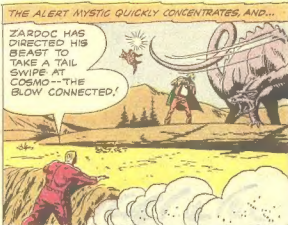
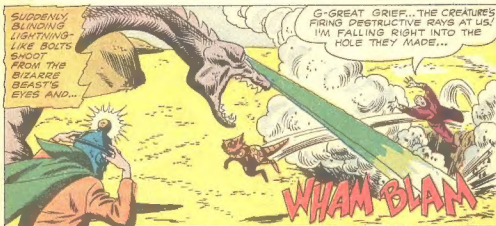


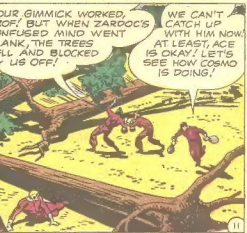
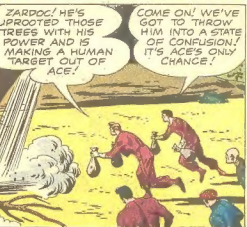
CONTINUED ON 388 PAGE FOLLOWING...



CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN







SMILES CROSS THE FACES OF THE CONCERNED TEAM AS...

HE'S COMING TO... JUST GOT THE WIND KNOCKED OUT OF HIM, MEN!

WELL, YOUR CAPTIVE CRIMINALS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION TO ESCAPE WITH ZARDOC!



ANYWAY WE RECOVERED THE MONEY THEY STOLE FROM THE BANK, ACE!

AND WE FOUND OUT THAT ZARDOC IS GUNNING COSMO BECAUSE OUR SPACE PET IS THE BIG THREAT TO HIS SUCCESS. THAT KNOWLEDGE WILL BE TO OUR ADVANTAGE! C'MON!



LATER THAT DAY, IN A RAVINE DEEP IN THE HILLS...

OF COURSE THAT PET WILL LEAD THE CHALLENGERS TO US AGAIN, BOYS! BUT I'VE TAKEN SOME TARGET PRACTICE WITH MY BEAST'S RAYS--I WON'T MISS AGAIN...

T-THEN START ZEROING IN, BOSS! LOOK!



THIS TIME, THE DISINTEGRATING RAYS WILL WIPE HIM FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH! OBSERVE...

IT'S THAT CRAZY PET. AGAIN!

ONCE AGAIN, THE FANTASTIC CREATURE IS SPAWNED INTO EXISTENCE--BUT THIS TIME...

CRASH

KABOOM

Y-YOU DID IT, ZARDOC! THEIR PET'S GONE--VANISHED!

RIGHT ON TARGET, BOYS! AND NOW, DEALING WITH THE CHALLENGERS WILL BE SIMPLE!

BUT THEN, FROM NOWHERE...



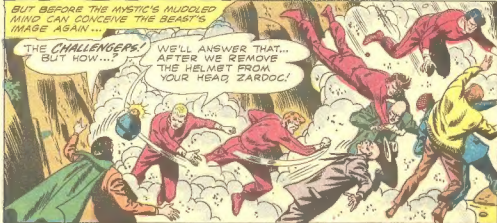
H-HUH! IT'S THE PET... THE THING'S STILL ALIVE!

SOMETHING'S BACKFIRED! MUST CONCENTRATE AGAIN... QUICKLY...

BUT BEFORE THE MYSTIC'S MUDDLED MIND CAN CONCEIVE THE BEAST'S IMAGE AGAIN...

THE CHALLENGERS!
BUT HOW...?

WE'LL ANSWER THAT...
AFTER WE REMOVE
THE HELMET FROM
YOUR HEAD, ZARDOC!



WE USED YOUR OWN
GIMMICK AGAINST
YOU, ZARDOC! THAT
WASN'T COSMO YOU
"DESTROYED"-- BUT
A REFLECTED
IMAGE OF HIM,
ON A MIRROR!

AND WHILE YOU
WERE TAKING THE
"BAIT," WE SLIPPED
UP HERE TO SPRING
OUR LITTLE
SURPRISE ON THE
PACK OF YOU!



AND LATER, AS THE CRIMINALS ARE
LED FROM THE HILLS...

WE'LL HAVE TO
DESTROY THAT
METEOR ROCK
FROM SPACE--
IT'S TOO
DANGEROUS
A MENACE!

THERE'S ONE
THING FROM
SPACE, THOUGH,
THAT'S NOT A
MENACE--OUR
LITTLE SPACE-
PET ALLY!



THE
END

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Tootsie Roll
ICE CREAM BAR

alias

"Best Lick On A Stick"

